

building of observation machans by those who have the opportunity and the time is a feature which we would like to see more generally adopted. Eds.]

II.—NOTES ON THE COMMON INDIAN LANGUR (*PITHECUS ENTELLUS*)

(*With a plate*)

A description of this familiar monkey is unnecessary. Mr. Pocock in a recent paper in this journal has outlined the distinguishing characters of its various races and their distribution. Looked upon as sacred by many Hindus for the part he played in the rescue of Sita from captivity at the hands of Ravana, the dread Rakshasa of Lanka, the Hanuman monkey enjoys the benefits of a rigid protection which has made him a positive nuisance in many parts of the country. After one leaves Ahmedabad by the narrow gauge line of the Rajputana Malwa Railway, these langurs are a familiar sight on the railway stations. They even make bold to enter the carriages to receive offerings of food and on one occasion I had two great fellows seated on the window sills of my compartment complacently eating the fruit I gave them. They accepted all they got as a right, but resented and were suspicious of any familiarity. A waggon-load of these monkeys was once despatched on this railway to a destination several stations beyond their home town. This was the last desperate effort of its human inhabitants to rid themselves of at least some of the members of a community who were amenable to no laws, respected no property rights, and transgressed every rule of good citizenship. Unfortunately the deportees were detained at a station which already had a surplus and thriving monkey population. Active and hostile demonstrations against this newly arrived band of reverend signors with their dames and children was out of the question. Besides the monkeys had already scattered all over the town so the situation, intolerable as it was, had to be accepted. But it has led to bad feeling amongst the citizens of these otherwise quite friendly towns. The practice of using monkeys as a medium for paying off old scores is not unknown. A quantity of grain scattered on a neighbour's roof as a lure to the observant and willing langurs will result in the turning over and the destruction of a goodly portion of his tiles. Unfortunately there is no effective method of preventing a return match on your own roof as the langurs are willing to oblige all parties without prejudice.

A great part of the langur's dietary consists of leaves and young shoots of trees. Blanford points out that they appear to be immune against certain vegetable poisons. Doses of 5 to 10 grains of strychnine have been administered to a Common Langur without effect, while the same dose kills a *Rhesus* monkey in a very short time. In North Kanara, where the tree (*Nux vomica*) grows from which strychnine is obtained langurs eat quantities of its fruit which they seem to relish. The langur is a sociable animal and lives in larger or smaller communities, comprised of individuals of both sexes and varying ages. The adults differ considerably in size and weight and also to some extent in colouring. A male measuring 5' 6" in extreme length, weighed by Shortridge scaled 35 lbs.,



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2.

LANGURS AT THEIR SIESTA.

